Minority Groups Badgered for Votes

By Jack Anderson

The Watergate grand jury is considering action against 1972 Nixon campaigners for using federal funds to badger votes from Chicanos, blacks and other minority groups.

The master plan for gearing government machinery and money to vote-getting is laid out in a memo, as we reported earlier, stamped "Eyes Only," and written Feb. 17, 1972, by White House efficiency expert Fred Malek.

Malek's main co-workers were then White House aides H.R. (Bob) Haldeman, John Ehrlichman and Charles Colson, plus John Mitchell, the Attorney General who was soon to become the generalissimo of the 1972 campaign.

As laid out by Malek, the White House crew would see that administration "programs are responsive to and coordinated with campaign needs."

Although Malek insisted to us that the "Responsiveness Plan" was never fully into operation, we have now obtained evidence that among blacks and Spanish-Americans, at least, the program was in full swing.

The grand jury, for instance, has zeroed in on the case of Leveo Sanchez, a Spanish-American businessman with a firm called Development Associates in Washington. Sanchez, who was getting Small Business Administration help, had the audacity to refuse to kick in to the Nixon campaign.

After the refusal, Sanchez was asked to lunch by former White House Spanish-American aide William Marumoto, who reportedly was unhappy with the turndown. Memos in the hands of Watergate sleuths show Marumoto then conferred with SBA officials and within days Sanchez was cut off. There is some evidence, however, that SBA acted before Marumoto could get to them.

The Watergate prosecutors under Leon Jaworski have also gathered data on the "Responsiveness Plan" from both the Senate Watergate staff and a House Banking subcommittee.

Among the House material, mostly assembled by subcommittee investigator Curtis Prins, is the case of Aceco Tool Company, headed by Joe Aceves, then chairman of Democrats for Nixon in central California.

The fortunate Aceves got the largest single business development grant ever awarded by the SBA, despite objections from the SBA professional staff. Aceves denied to my associate Jack Cloherty that politics were involved.

Another case now under the Watergate prosecutors' scrutiny is a lucrative, non-competitive wrecking contract given by SBA to a Washington firm which had not previously done any wrecking work. It did not even have a wrecking yard. However, it shared office space and worked closely with the pro-Nixon "Black Silent Majority" group.

The House investigators also turned up a dubious SBA handling of Cade Services, Inc., of Los Angeles, whose secretary-treasurer is the former top White House black, Robert Brown. A local SBA official asked for an audit of Cade's relationship with an SBA-funded management firm. SBA in Washington killed the audit.

Besides the valuable help from the House subcommittee, the Jaworski probers have been poring over hearings on "Responsiveness" held by the Senate Watergate Committee. The little-publicized hearings show the White House used everything from a promise of a federal judgeship to a prominent Chicano to federally-supported campaign trips by Mr. Nixon's daughters to get minority groups to vote for the President.

Footnote: SBA Administrator Tom Kleppe has repeatedly denied any knowledge that his agency was used for political purposes. Marumoto has denied all wrongdoing in testimony before the Watergate committee. Ex-White House aide Brown did not return our calls. Malek told us his plan was mostly a "talking paper."

TAPE TROUBLE—The sanitized transcript of the White House conversations, showing tantalizing statements as "unintelligible" and "inaudible" flies in the face of testimony by the man who set up the taping system.

He is Alexander Butterfield, a former White House aide who is now Federal Aviation Administrator. On July 16, 1973, before the Senate Watergate committee, Butterfield said that the equipment in the President's offices would pick up "any and all conversations no matter where the conversations took place in the room and no matter how soft the conversations might have been."

Butterfield also swore the machines were "checked at least daily" and were "always working properly." Yet the White House has been trying to convince the public that the recordings were made on makeshift equipment that frequently misfunctioned.

WASHINGTON WHIRL—The new all-volunteer armed services marched to New Orleans a few days ago to urge 12,000 school counselors to help them recruit students. With some $50,000 in exhibits and 200 servicemen, the Pentagon sought to pressure the American Personnel and Guidance Association convention into passing the word that service life is just another form of university life . . . Grover Cleveland once ran on the slogan, "We love him for the enemies he has made." The same could be said about Henry Kissinger and Sen. Frank Church (D-Idaho), who have recently been attacked by right wing publicist Frank Capell. The attacks are part of a well-financed campaign to make Kissinger out to be a KGB agent and Church a Communist.

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